



PRESS RELEASE

27 April 2010 No.3

MINISTERS OF BASIC COUNTRIES (BRAZIL, CHINA, INDIA, SOUTH AFRICA) STRESS PRIMACY OF UNITED NATIONS AS FORUM FOR CLIMATE NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT THE WORLD CANNOT WAIT INDEFINITELY FOR THE UNITED STATES TO ACT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

At their third meeting that took place in Cape Town, South Africa, from 25 to 26 April 2010, the ministers in charge of climate change negotiations from the BASIC countries (Brazil, China, India, and South Africa) stressed their determination to have their countries “continue to show leadership in acting on climate change.” In particular, they noted that “domestic (climate change) legislation in the USA had been postponed and indicated that the world could not wait indefinitely.” They also stressed that the United Nations, through the UNFCCC, is “the only legitimate forum for negotiation of climate change.”

The Ministers who participated in the meeting were Mr. Xie Zhenhua, Vice Chairman of the National Development and Reforms Commission from China, Mr. Izabella Teixeira, Minister for Environment from Brazil, Mr. Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State, Environment and Forests from India, and Mrs. Buyelwa Sonjica, Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs from South Africa. Also present were other South African Ministers: HE Minister Trevor Manuel, Minister in the Presidency, Deputy Minister Sue van der Merwe, of International Relations and Co-operation and HE Deputy Minister Rejoyce Mabudafhasi, of Environmental Affairs.

In their joint statement, the Ministers emphasized the following key points:

- they support international legally binding agreements and noted that such “already exists in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol”
- under the mandate of the Bali Roadmap, the two tracks for such agreements include an agreement on emission reductions under a second commitment period for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol and a legally binding agreement on long-term cooperative action under the Convention
- a legally binding outcome “should be concluded at Cancun, Mexico in 2010, or at the latest in South Africa by 2011”

- the climate change negotiations to follow a “two-pronged approach” of: (i) developing a politically balanced outcome in the formal negotiations in the UNFCCC’s two Ad hoc Working Groups, and (ii) using the 2010 \$10 billion fast-start funding to develop, test and demonstrate practical implementation approaches to both adaptation and mitigation
- there are some areas in which progress could be made in the run-up to Cancun
- a step-change is required in the negotiations and that the world could not wait indefinitely for US domestic climate legislation as “it hinders our ability to reach an internationally legally binding agreement”
- equity will be a key issue for any agreement, in particular carefully analyzing the implications of a global carbon budget for individual countries. This budget must be based on a multilateral agreement about equitable burden-sharing, including historical responsibility for climate change, the need to allow developing countries equitable space for development, and adequate finance, technology and capacity-building support provided by developed countries for all developing countries
- they reaffirmed that negotiations “must be based on the official negotiating texts in the AWGLCA and AWGKP, and negotiations conducted in an inclusive manner” and that that the “only legitimate forum for negotiation of climate change is the UNFCCC”
- they stressed that the financing commitments in the Copenhagen Accord “must be operationalised” and “should be provided by developed countries”
- they urged all Annex I countries “to raise their level of ambition” in implementing “the two-fold commitments by developed countries to both provide finance for developing countries and reduce their own emissions, with consequences for non-fulfillment”
- they affirmed that the BASIC countries will continue their consultations with other countries and groups, emphasized the BASIC is more than a forum focused on negotiations, supported collaboration among experts from BASIC countries, and welcomed the creation on an on-going forum
- they agreed that, “remaining anchored in the G77&China, they will continue to contribute constructively to the multilateral negotiations on climate change.”

The next BASIC ministerial meeting will take place in Brazil at the end of July, with China offering to host a meeting at the end of October 2010.

Attached please find the BASIC statement.

For more information, please contact South Centre's media contact Vice Yu: EMAIL yu@southcentre.org, or telephone 41 22 791 8055